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February 13, 1988

INSIDE...

WRESTLEMANIA GETS 'TRUMPED'

It was "a great deal" when entrepreneur Donald Trump approached the World Wrestling Federation (WWF) about holding Wrestlemania IV at Trump Plaza Hotel & Casino, Atlantic City, N.J. However, "we're not deserting arenas," asserts the WWF's Mike Weber. The March 27 event will be offered via closed-circuit television at 160 buildings; the pay-per-view option to nine million households is said to be the largest ever. See story on Page 9.

LOCAL FIRM LANDS S.D. CONTRACT

The San Diego Convention Center will stick close to home for its food service operation: locally-based Premier Food Services Inc. beat out ARA Leisure Services and Service America to land the contract there. Sales at the facility, slated to open in 1989, have been estimated at \$18 million within the first five years. See story on Page 15.

REPORT FROM THE WFA

More than 1,300 delegates were on hand to "Reach For The Stars" in Anaheim, Calif., site of the 1988 Western Fairs Assn. convention. Roundtable discussions and showcases drew standing-room-only crowds; the keynote address was presented by entertainer Art Linkletter. See story on Page 21.

PISTON POWER

"It's like you're talking figures from a football game," said National Basketball Assn. spokesman Seth Sylvan of the 61,983 who attended a Pistons-Celtics match at the Pontiac (Mich.) Silverdome. Usually, a sold-out basketball game there is 22,366, but within the last two months alone, close to 40,000 general admission tickets were sold for the Jan. 29 game. See story on Page 12.

'COOL' RUN IN WEST PALM BEACH

With highs in the 60s, it was a little too cool for many Floridians to attend the South Florida Fair, West Palm Beach. A record opening day drew 38,000 on Jan. 18, but the event closed Jan. 31 with a total gate of \$87,607, down slightly from last year. High winds and cool temperatures were blamed. See story on Page 21.

ON AB'S BACK COVER...

Gibson, Fla., was ready for an influx of showpeople, with 80-degree weather and sunshine reported prior to the opening of the IUSA Trade Show & Extravaganza. In other news, Myers International Midways President Bill Myers tells AB of his retirement plans. Larry's Amusements trims back its Caribbean operation, and routes are discussed for Twin Lakes Amusement and the Guthrie brothers. See stories on Page 36.

Disney Projects Pricetag: More Than \$1 Billion

By TIM O'BRIEN

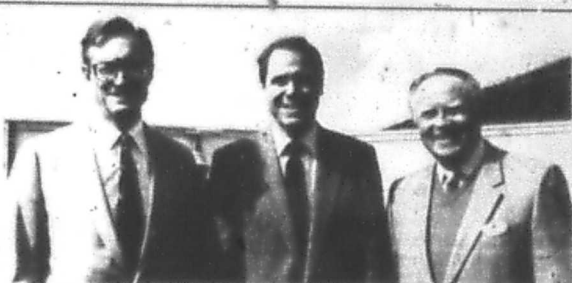
LAKE BUENA VISTA, Fla. — A myriad of projects are now underway here at Walt Disney World to the tune of more than \$1 billion.

"That's the construction currently underway here on our property," said Tom Elrod, senior vice president of marketing and admissions for Walt Disney Attractions.

He noted that the company is "in a most aggressive program right now that clearly represents phase three of many phases" of both planned and yet-to-be-planned activity for this facility.

Elrod, responsible not only for Disney World but also Disneyland and Tokyo Disneyland, told AB the company has file cabinets full of "sky blue dreams" that it never gets around to developing.

"We keep getting newer, better ideas all the time, and if we get excited about a new project, we'll act on



SMILING IN EPCOT — Smiles were the order of the day following the ground-breaking of a new Epcot Center pavilion at Florida's Walt Disney World. From left are Disney officials Frank Wells, president and chief operating officer; Michael Eisner, chairman and chief executive officer; and Dick Nunis, president, Walt Disney Attractions. (AB Photo)

it very quickly. Even a relatively good idea never gets far in the Disney organization. It has to be sensational."

Phase one in Florida, was the development of the Magic Kingdom. Phase two was Epcot Center, and phase three, according to Elrod, is "all this other stuff."

The largest project in the latter category is the new Disney-MGM Studios project. "People are underestimating this project," Elrod said. "We're opening a third theme park

It's a third full-day adventure for Walt Disney World." He added the project's value is in excess of \$400 million.

The 134-acre complex will be a complete motion picture studio, with a busy backlot area. Film and television production will begin at the studio in June, with the tour portion opening in early 1989. Several Disney Channel and made-for-television shows are to be among the first to utilize the

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Super Sunday XXII: A Winner For NFL, Service America \$1.4 Million In Revenue Estimated Celebration Keeps Expanding, From Food, Drink & Program Sales Steege Tells Stadium Managers

By LINDA DECKARD

SAN DIEGO — Service America took \$1.4 million to the bank from sale of food, drink and programs at Super Bowl XXII, including catering to the boxes and service in four restaurants, according to Jerry Long, vice president. With attendance at 73,302 for the Jan. 31 event at Jack Murphy Stadium here, that would amount to a per cap of \$19.10.

ARA Leisure Services reported another \$1.3 million in merchandise sales the day of the game. Larry Kilfoy, ARA vice president, said sales from 70 stands, handled by 300 employees supervised by 40 managers, were estimated at between \$1.2 million and \$1.4 million. Kirk Dupre, vice president, expected to have final tallies by Friday, Feb. 4. He was taking additional

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By LINDA DECKARD

ORANGE, Calif. — Super Bowl XXII was a weeklong celebration in San Diego, more so this year than ever before, according to Jim Steege, National Football League (NFL) special events coordinator.

Addressing the opening session of the 14th annual stadium managers' seminar here Feb. 1-4, Steege told attendees that a phenomenal number of people came by the stadium simply to see the decorations and site prior to the game.

In the past, public viewing of the Super Bowl site had attracted 2,000 people a day maximum. This year, on the Wednesday prior to the Jan. 31 game, 7,500 people came the first half day. 22,500 walked in Thursday, 8,500 dropped by from 9-11

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LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT — Vivienne Gardner, right, co-chair of Box Office Management International (BOMI) '88 and retired from the box office at Gammage Center, Arizona State University, Tempe, receives the Lifetime Achievement Award during BOMI's Jan. 26-29 convention in Las Vegas. With her: Patricia Spira, left, BOMI executive director, and Don Casper, outgoing chairman of the awards committee and box office manager, Peoria (Ill.) Civic Center. (AB Photo)

Opinions On Computer Ticketing Aired During BOMI Convention

By LINDA DECKARD

LAS VEGAS — "Standardization" and "connectivity," the ability to interface equipment and talk to one another on different computer systems, are the buzzwords for the future of computer ticketing.

That was the opinion of the closing panel during the Jan. 26-29 convention of Box Office Management International (BOMI) here. The meeting drew an estimated 400 delegates, up from 334 last year, and boasted a trade show with 39 booths, including companies from West Germany, France, Canada and the U.S.

The trade show was nearly wall-to-wall computer ticketing and that was a topic of concern in box offices of today and tomorrow.

Garth Nelson, director, BASS/Ticketmaster, kicked off the panel on computers and the future by suggesting that extended use of the ATM card as identification both at the gate and at the seat might end scalping and counterfeiting in the future.

Video phones that reveal seat location to the buyer are already available on a limited basis. Sub-

scription departments are sending out laser disks now. "A magnetically-imbued ticket is being considered for use at the turnstiles, similar to the BART (Bay Area Rapid Transit) ticket we use now in San Francisco," Nelson said.

Dirk Epperson, Performing Arts Technology, emphasized the need to "transfer information between systems. We can come up with an electronic transfer system that maintains security. BOMI is the place to come up with that type of situation. A universal protocol is what's needed today."

John McNickle, Ticket Control Systems, suggested IBM built in equipment obsolescence on a five-to-seven-year cycle. His assumption drew debate and disagreement from other panelists who declared the technology is improving rapidly, but IBM is always selling the best system available at the time without a plan to replace. McNickle, however, urged computer buyers to choose an open-ended system — "take a little bit longer view."

Paul Onish, Computer Terminal Systems, discussed the evolution of printers. By the 1990s, there will be a security bar code added to ticket stock-magnetic encoding, he predicted. He urged standardization in ticket format. Eventually, information only the machine can read will be encoded on tickets, and a standard format would make the process more valuable.

A member of the audience asked when it would be possible to print both sides of the ticket, with advertising on the back. There is no two-sided ticket printing on demand now, but it will happen.

Use of ticket stubs for point-of-sale discounts with a sponsor is growing in popularity. A hand count showed ticket costs for box office managers in attendance were varying from one cent to five cents.

Dick Grace, Ticketron, suggested more education is needed as more speed and power is factored into personal computers. Susanne Jahr-Seitz, Teleticket, revealed 85 percent of tickets sold in Germany are still hard ticket stock.

Steven Gansky, Fox Information

EVENT IS 'NEVER THE SAME'...

Wrestlemania IV Set For Atlantic City As Trump Gives 'Great Deal' To WWF

By MELINDA NEWMAN

The World Wrestling Federation (WWF) will join forces with one of the kings of real estate, Donald Trump, when Wrestlemania IV is waged March 27 at the Trump Plaza Hotel & Casino, Atlantic City, N.J.

"Trump approached us and just gave us a great deal," said WWF Director of Media Relations Mike Weber. "They're coordinating the whole thing with a Wrestlemania Festival. There will also be a 5K run Saturday morning (March 26), led by Bruno Sammartino, former WWF champ, now an on-air announcer."

The tickets for the 18,000 seats at the Atlantic City Convention Center, located adjacent to Trump's, are priced at \$150, \$100, \$50 and \$25 and went on sale Jan. 30. After 48 hours, Weber said 4,000 had been sold.

The event's organizers eschewed going into another stadium immediately following last year's success because "the only thing that's

consistent in the history of Wrestlemania is that it's never the same," said WWF's Basil DeVito.

"Wrestlemania I was at the country's premier arena, Madison Square Garden; Wrestlemania II was broadcast from three arenas

simultaneously in New York, Chicago and L.A., and Wrestlemania III set the indoor record at the Silverdome.

"This is a way to keep a freshness with the event. I'm sure we'll

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Damage To Hoosier Dome Roof Not Seen As Serious

By LINDA DECKARD

ORANGE, Calif. — Offers of help and equipment were quickly forthcoming when word reached stadium managers meeting here that the Teflon-coated fabric roof of the Hoosier Dome, Indianapolis, collapsed early Monday (Feb. 1) morning, dumping gallons of water into the stadium.

Dean Phillips, manager of that facility and the adjacent Indiana Convention Center, said he would be surprised if the damages-to-

talled more than \$50,000, most of that spent on labor and equipment.

No one was injured and the dome was dark at the time of the accident.

Involved is a 40-foot tear in the Bird Aire Corp. roof and thousands of gallons of water on the Monsanto AstroTurf. There is also some concern that the Coffeen Mfg. sound equipment may have sustained some water damage.

Preliminary findings indicate the

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BACKSTAGE — Terry Themm, left, director of marketing, and Holly Clement, hospitality coordinator, are seen backstage at the Chicago Theatre, which has a tradition of performers' artwork decorating the walls. AT&T will be the presenting sponsor for the theater's 1988 season. Chicago Theatre Restoration Assn. officials have paid an overdue \$882,000 installment on a \$12.5 million city loan; along with that, the principals reportedly repaid a separate \$2.6 million loan and are now up to date. (AB Photo)

AT&T Signs One-Year Corporate...

Continued from Page 4
AT&T items into those programs, Reiling said.

With the Chicago Theatre renting its suite boxes to corporations, the AT&T branch office in Chicago had already leased one before the pact was made, said Reiling. "Ironically, we didn't really know that until we were into negotiations," she said. "It was never one of the points of the contract."

However, AT&T in Chicago will be entertaining some of its clients at the theater.

First-quarter attractions for the Chicago Theatre for 1988 include:

Julie Andrews, Jan. 28-31; Al Jarreau and Jay Leno, in conjunction with NBA All-Star Game activities, Feb. 6; "The Barber of Seville," New York City Opera, 7; "Can-Can," with Chita Rivera & The Rockettes, 9-14; Alexis Weissenberg in recital, 16; Ukrainian State Dance Company of the USSR, 19-21; Johnny Mathis and Henry Mancini, 25-28;

David Copperfield, March 4-6; Marcel Marceau, 11-13; Frank Sinatra, Dean Martin and Sammy Davis Jr., 18-20; and "South Pacific," with Robert Goulet, 22-27.

Wrestlemania IV Set For Atlantic City As Trump Gives 'Great Deal'...

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be in another domed stadium and draw more than 100,000 people at some point."

Wrestlemania III, held last March, set the indoor crowd record by drawing 93,173 people to the Pontiac (Mich.) Silverdome, beating the 87,500 total established by the Rolling Stones at a 1981 Superdome performance in New Orleans.

"But we're not deserting arenas just because this is taking place at Trump's," Weber said. "It'll be in 160 buildings via closed circuit television."

"More than one million seats, up slightly from Wrestlemania III, will be available through closed circuit locations. 'We're going into basically the same number of buildings; it's just that we've opted for more larger ones this time,' he said.

Included are Madison Square Garden, New York; Boston Garden; The Spectrum, Philadelphia; and Joe Louis Arena, Detroit. Tickets, priced from \$15-\$88, are to go on sale Feb. 13.

WWF retains control of all the closed-circuit locations. "We're ultimately responsible," Weber said. "We do all the contracts and we don't submit out any of the buildings." However, WWF is utilizing three promoters who assist the organization year-round: Zane Bred-

off, Denver; Jerry Brisco, Florida; and Barry Fox, Chicago.

Buildings were selected on the basis of their past track records. "Very few of them are new venues for us," Weber said. "They've either hosted events before or we've used them for Wrestlemania closed circuit."

No set deal was worked out with the facilities. "Some are flat fees, some are percentages. If there are 100 different buildings, there are 100 different deals."

MORE PAY-PER-VIEW, TOO

According to Weber, Wrestlemania will really make its mark through pay-per-view cable. Such a set-up will be available to nine million households, the largest pay-per-view option ever established.

Wrestlemania III was available to six million pay-per-view patrons, and the WWF Survivor Series in November was distributed to 7.5 million addressable cable homes. The Survivor Series achieved a seven percent national buy rate and Wrestlemania III scored a buy rate record of 10.2 percent. The basic pay-per-view price is \$14.95.

"We are so pleased with the recent successes of the WWF Survivor Series and the WWF Royal Rumble that we have decided to

expand our commitment to the cable industry and increase our schedule of pay-per-view events," said James E. Troy, senior vice president of international and pay-per-view operations.

Other upcoming pay-per-view events already on the calendar include Aug. 19, 1988 and Jan. 15, 1989. WWF began really beefing up its pay-per-view program after Wrestlemania II. At the same time, it scaled down its closed-circuit program, cutting the number of outlets from 230 to 160 for Wrestlemania III.

The lineup for Wrestlemania had not been established by AB presstime. Weber said it would be predicated by the outcome of the Hulk Hogan-Andre The Giant match, which was set for Feb. 6 at Market Square Arena, Indianapolis. "I think you can count on at least one of them and other top wrestlers will be there."

The nationally-televised (NBC) prime time event marked the first time the two stars had wrestled since Hogan defeated Andre at Wrestlemania III.

Weber said there are no plans to show Wrestlemania IV at a later date on cable.

"Wrestlemania II aired two months later on Showtime, and we didn't do that with Wrestlemania III. Right now, we probably won't air Wrestlemania IV either."

Damage To Hoosier Dome Roof Not Seen As Serious...

Continued from Page 9

trouble may have begun with "a possible computer problem. It's possible the computer didn't show proper readings," Phillips said.

Cleanup efforts were hampered by 40-mile-per-hour winds and rain on Monday. At 1:30 a.m. that day, "we lost static pressure, which keeps the roof up," Phillips reported. "All the fans went off."

Five pounds per square-inch of pressure inside the dome is required to keep the roof up. At 5:30 a.m., it came down.

Bird Aire, located in Buffalo, N.Y., had a crew from Illinois out immediately, Phillips said. By Tuesday, eight feet of the tear had been repaired and the rest had been laced.

Patching requires use of a hot iron, and rain made work very slow. By Tuesday afternoon, efforts were further hampered by snow flurries.

Water on the floor had "some of the AstroTurf floating. There was water under it. It's hard to find equipment to clean that up," said Phillips.

Chem Lawn Corp. sent four trucks with pumps to vacuum the water. Heat to dry the turf was next.

Interviewed Tuesday (2) here, Phillips said "a lot of cooperation here" included offers from Glenn Redner, Riverfront Stadium, Cincinnati, and Larry Staverman, Cleveland Stadium, just two of the many who volunteered help and equipment. Neither Staverman's Super Soppers nor Redner's equipment quite fit the bill.

The goal was to be ready for National Football League scouts, who were to get a non-public look at potential draft choices Wednesday through Friday, Feb. 3-5. The event was to take place as planned.

"We have a problem stripping the field. We normally use a water-soluble paint," Phillips said. "We'll either put it back on or use powder."

The NFL scout camp was to be

followed, appropriately enough, by a boat show moving in Saturday.

The dome is insured by Alexander & Alexander. Phillips said nothing but very preliminary discussions on liability had been held.

The Hoosier Dome opened May 1984 and is going into its fourth football season. "This is the first time we've had a problem," Phillips noted.

Johnson Controls installed the computer system. Irwin Seating installed the outdoor-type seats which sustained no damage.

The roof collapse follows on the heels of a major hitch in remodel-

ing — asbestos was discovered in lobby and meeting room walls in the convention center.

Phillips said remodeling will cost an additional \$300,000 due to asbestos abatement. "We were to be finished in mid-February. The lobby was closed two weeks instead of one week and the timetable was moved back."

"We're building a tunnel indoors, like you see at construction sites outdoors," to keep the traffic flowing and the convention center open for business.

Bill Sampson is overseeing remodeling, he added.

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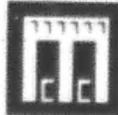


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